

**REMARKS**

Applicants have amended claims 14, 24 and 29 and have added new claims 35-43. In addition, Applicants have cancelled claims 1-13, 16-23, and 33-34; thus twenty claims remain pending: 14, 15, 24-32 and 35-43.

New claims 35-38 are supported, at least, by cancelled claims 9-12 and new claims 39-42 and 43 are supported, at least, by cancelled claims 17-20 and 22.

**Information Disclosure Statements**

The Examiner indicates that the information disclosure statements filed 12/6/2000, 1/8/2002 and 5/30/2003 fail to comply with 37 CFR 1.97, 1.98 and MPEP § 609 on the basis that no legible copies of each foreign patent document and non-patent literature publication were submitted.

Although Applicants did submit copies of each foreign patent document and non-patent literature publication with the above-identified information disclosure statements, Applicants understand that the Examiner did not receive the submitted copies. As a consequence, Applicants are filing another information disclosure statement under separate cover, which includes all of the prior art listed in the 12/6/2000, 1/8/2002 and 5/30/2003 information disclosure statements. Copies of each foreign patent document and non-patent literature publication are being submitted again with this IDS.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner return, with the mailing of the next paper, an initialed copy of the submitted Form PTO/SB/08.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 14-15 and 24-32 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 14 to include all the limitations of the base claim 8 and intervening claim 13. In addition, Applicants have amended each of claims 24 and 29 to include the base claim 16 and intervening claims 21 and 23.

As a consequence, Applicants submit that claims 14-15 and 24-32 are now in condition for allowance. In addition, Applicants submit that new claims 35-38, which depend from allowable claim 14, and claims 39-42, which depend from allowable claim 24 are allowable, at least, by virtue of their dependence from allowable claims 14 and 24. Thus, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowability relative to claims 14, 15, 24-32 and 35-43.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 16 and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Caterisano (WO 98/18235). Applicants have cancelled claims 16 and 21-23; thus rendering this rejection moot. Applicants, however, reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 16 and 21-23 in a continuing application.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Caterisano (WO 98/18235) in view of Le Boudec et al. (US 6,016,306). Applicants have cancelled claims 8-13; thus rendering this rejection moot. Applicants, however, reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 8-13 in a continuing application.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Caterisano (WO 98/18235) in view of "Official Notice." Applicants have cancelled claims 17-19; thus rendering this rejection moot. Applicants, however, reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 17-19 in a continuing application.

The Examiner has additionally rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Caterisano (WO 98/18235) and "Official Notice" in view of Le Boudec et al. (US 6,016,306). Applicants have cancelled claim 20; thus rendering this rejection moot. Applicants, however, reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claim 20 in a continuing application.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that no further impediments exist to the allowance of this application and, therefore, solicit an indication of allowability. However, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned if any question or comments arise.

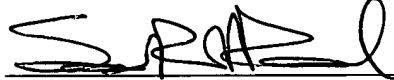
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16, 1.17, and 1.21 that may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-1283.

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Respectfully submitted,

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